

THE GREAT TEACHER AND REMEMBRANCER

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“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”
John 14:26

THE Savior, when He departed from this world, provided for all the wants of His people, not so much by giving them divers benefits, as by promising them the presence of a gracious Person who should supply them all that their spiritual needs might demand. I trust there are many of us who know in some degree the value of the promise, “I will send the Comforter unto you,” and that we know that when that Comforter comes, He brings us all good things.

We have not to look in one place for quickening and in another place for comfort, in another for instruction and in a fourth for illumination. But when we receive the Spirit, we have all things in one. I may say of Him, as of Jesus Christ, “In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” In Jesus it dwelt in a real human nature, physical as well as spiritual, but in the Holy Spirit we have the same fullness of deity, but He comes in and dwells—resides—in His people.

Our Savior here directs us to one particular blessing, which the coming of the Holy Spirit would bring us, namely, that of divine instruction. In endeavoring to enter in some measure into the text, tonight—too briefly to enter into it fully—we shall, first of all, remark that the text suggests to us—

I. THE VALUE OF ALL THAT JESUS CHRIST HAS SPOKEN.

For He tells us that the Holy Spirit shall “bring to our remembrance all things whatsoever he has said unto us.”

When the Savior was with His disciples, it is very possible that many of His choice sayings fell to the ground *for want of attention on their part*. They did not, perhaps, know that every word of His had a fullness in it that should have been treasured up by them as of priceless worth. But now He tells them that it shall be the Holy Spirit’s office to teach them all such truth and to bring all their meanings to their remembrance.

Brethren, there is a great danger nowadays in not attaching sufficient importance to the teaching of Scripture. You will sometimes hear persons speak very disparagingly of doctrinal truth and others will smile at anything like dispensational truth. Some are inclined to throw experiential teaching in the background and some few speak very sadly about practical truth.

But our Lord here speaks of “all things whatsoever I have said unto you,” and He also speaks of the Spirit teaching us “all things.” We may, therefore, believe that every truth that is revealed in Scripture has its proper place and its importance, and we may gather this from the fact *that Christ has taken the trouble to speak it*.

We do not believe that He has uttered one foolish word—nay more—not one useless word, for in the whole compass of His teaching there is not to be found a single passage which should have been left unsaid. There may be repetitions, but there are no redundancies. He may have taught the same truth in several shapes, but He has never taught it once too often.

He has never revealed a truth which it were better to conceal, just as He has never concealed a truth which it would have been better to reveal. If my Lord has taught anything, it must be worth my while to

learn it. If Christ lifts the veil, it is my privilege to look and what He manifests to me I ought not to be slow to gaze upon.

Moreover, brethren, in addition to the importance which must attach to these things, because Christ has spoken them, there is this—that He now *sends the Holy Spirit to teach them to us*. If you say that any one part of the truth is unimportant, you do as good as say that to that extent the Holy Spirit has come upon an unimportant or valueless mission.

You perceive it is declared that He is to teach us “all things,” but if some of these “all things” are really of such minor importance and so quite non-essential, then surely it is not worth while disturbing our minds with them. And so to that degree, at any rate, we accuse the Holy Spirit of having come to do what is not necessary to be done. And I trust that our minds recoil with holy repulsion from such a half-blasphemy as that.

Brethren and sisters beloved, He teaches us “all things,” because it is necessary for us to learn all things, and so He comes to bring to our remembrance not part, but in turn, the whole of our Lord’s wondrous teaching. That teaching is essential to our knowledge of divine things, to our comfort and progress in spiritual things—that remembrance is part of our soul’s discipline and advance.

I wish that some of my friends would get this very simple and very old truth into the depths of their minds and hearts, for then they would surely study a great many things that they overlook now, and I think they would not be so apt to excuse their own want of diligence in the school of Christ, by saying, “Well, there are some all-important doctrines. We have studied them and that is enough.”

Brethren, when a boy goes to school, he may say, “If I learn arithmetic, I shall be able to be a tradesman and that is what I shall be. I do not want to read that dry Latin book. I do not care to read that book of poetry. It does not matter about my writing such a very elegant round hand.” But the schoolmaster says, “My boy, you are put under my teaching to learn all things, and it is not for you to pick and choose what class you will attend.”

Now, we are scholars under the tuition of the blessed Spirit and it is not for us to say, “I will learn the doctrine of justification by faith, and when I know that, I shall not trouble my mind about election, I shall not raise any question about final perseverance, I shall not inquire into the ordinances, whether believer’s baptism or infant baptism is right—I take no interest in these things—I have learned the essential matter and I will neglect the rest.”

You will not say this if you are an obedient disciple, for do you not know that the ministers of Christ have received a commission to teach all things that Christ has taught them, and do you think that our commission is frivolous and vexatious? Do you think that Christ would bid us teach you what it is no need of you to learn, or especially, that the Holy Ghost would Himself come to dwell in the midst of His church and to teach them all things, when out of those, “all things,” there are, according to your vain supposition, some things that were quite as well, if not better, left alone?

Brethren, whatever the Lord has spoken as a master concerns His servants. Whatsoever He has delivered as a prophet, concerns His disciples. Whatsoever He has spoken as a friend, concerns us, His friends, and whatsoever He has taught us as Lord, concerns everyone of us as members of His body, of His flesh and His bones.

I must again reiterate this truth. I do not think I can leave it without trying still further to impress it upon your minds. There is a tendency, among us all, I suppose, to choose some part of the truth and attach undue importance to that, to the neglect of other truths.

It is a grave question if this is not the origin of various divisions which are to be found in the church of Christ—not so much heresy, as the attaching of disproportionate importance to some truth, to the disparaging or neglecting of others equally necessary.

Some brother speaking to me the other day, declared of a certain truth, “You cannot have too much of a good thing.” Whereupon I remarked, that a nose was a good thing, but it might be possible so to exaggerate it that you would spoil the beauty of the face. A mouth is a good thing and yet it may be very possible to have such a mouth that there would be no particular beauty about the visage, for the beauty

of the man consists in proportion, and the beauty of divine truth consists in the proportion in which every part of it is brought into view.

Now, there be some who exaggerate one feature and some another. There are some brethren who are fond of what is called “the high side” of doctrine. I am fond of it, too, very fond of it, but there is a temptation to bring that out and to neglect, perhaps, the practical part of the Gospel, and to cast into the background, possibly, the invitations of the Gospel, and those truths which concern our usefulness in the world.

Then, on the other hand, there are some who are so enamored of experience that nothing but experiential truth will suit them—they must be always harping upon that one string and they look down with contempt upon those who hold fast doctrinal truth, which is very wrong and shows that they have not yet been led into all the truth.

Alas! how many are so taken up with practical teaching that they grow legal for want of having the salt of the doctrines of grace to keep them right. But oh! if it were possible for our minds to hold all truth, as far as a finite mind could grasp it! If we could but cast aside the prejudices of education and perhaps, of constitution, too, and say to the Holy Spirit, “My Lord, I will bind myself neither to this party nor to that. I will subscribe neither to this formula nor to that. I am prepared to receive Your mind into my mind. I am prepared to give up much that I hold dear, if You will show me that it is not according to Your will, and I am prepared to receive the Gospel from You, as You shall be pleased to show it to me!”

It is all truth, and not some truth, that the Holy Spirit comes to teach. To teach His children truth in all its harmony, truth in all its parts, truth, indeed, as a whole.

But it may be said, “There must be some truths which are not so essential as others!” That is granted. There are some truths that are so vital to salvation and peace with God, and there are some others that do not vitally concern the regeneration and conversion of the soul, and upon these men may be in error, and yet not risk their souls for all eternity. But still, even these truths are part of the whole body of truth, and the body cannot do without its head, its heart, though it might lose a limb. Yet is that a reason why I should chop off a limb, or consent to have it maimed, because I could still exist without it?

I could exist without an eye. Shall I not, therefore, mind being blinded? There may be a bone in my body, possibly there are several, the use of which even the anatomist does not know. There are some nerves, especially nerves in connection with the organs of secretion, the use of which are not known to the best physiologists, but nobody, I suppose, would like to dispense with them—because each man who thinks, must feel that that God who made the man knew best how to make him perfect and how to adapt him to the position in which he would be placed. There may be bones or nerves in the human system which will never be used but once in our lives—and yet if they were not there we might not be able to get through that particular juncture.

So is it with the truths of Scripture. There may be a truth which I shall never want to use and which may never have a practical turn to serve in my life, but once, and then if I do not happen to know that truth just at that time, I may entail on myself a host of sorrows through my own ignorance, but which I ought to have prevented.

The Holy Spirit comes to teach all truth, and I beg yet again for the fourth time to reiterate that all truth must be necessary for you and for me, or else the Spirit of God would not have come to teach it to us, and that while we may give more prominent importance to the greater and more vital truths, yet there is not one truth in Scripture to which we are allowed to say, “Be still. Be quiet—we do not want you.”

Brethren, how many of you might be happy if you did but study doctrinal truth! You go lean and starved through the world, because your minister does not preach the doctrines of grace, does not give you the full weight of the truths of the sovereign grace of God. Still, if you but studied them for yourselves, you might yet have a bright eye and an elastic, bounding footstep, and rejoice in the everlasting love of God which never leaves His people, but preserves and glorifies them in the end.

And some, too, are always groaning from a sense of inward corruption and very properly studying their own hearts, but they might live gladsome, triumphant lives if they did but learn a little more of the liberty wherewith Christ makes His people free, and seek to drink in the precious truths of our standing in Christ and our perfection in Him. It is the willful neglect or refusal to believe some majestic truth that is the cause of nearly all our doubts and fears—and a great many other pieces of mischief that keep us from serving and honoring our Lord as He deserves to be served and honored by those who are not their own, but are bought with a price.

This first point we may now leave, if the Holy Spirit will but bring it home with power to our souls, for this truth, among others, must be taught us by Him.

We now come to a second point which is clearly in the text, namely, not only the value of all truth that our Lord Jesus Christ has spoken, but—

II. THE NEED OF THE HOLY SPIRIT TO TEACH US ALL THE TRUTH.

But cannot an honest and a willing mind learn all the truth that is in Scripture, without the teaching of the Holy Spirit? I infer that it cannot from the fact that the *Holy Spirit is provided*. There is nothing that is unnecessary in the covenant of grace, and the divine power is never unnecessarily exerted. It is constantly remarked of the miracles that there is not one of them that can be dispensed with, and God never interferes to do out of the course of nature what might be done according to the ordinary laws of nature.

If the Christian were fully equipped to know and understand the divine mind without the teaching of the Holy Spirit, then the Holy Spirit would not have been given. We should not find the Holy Spirit here unless it were necessary that He should be here. Even with Christ for a teacher, mark—so that there was no fault in the teacher—with Christ for a teacher, the disciples did not learn these truths without the teaching of the Holy Spirit. I infer, therefore, that much more is that teaching now necessary, and that the Spirit of God should abide with us, to teach us truth, and to bring the things which we have learned to our remembrance.

And why? Is it not because *there is a radical defect in us as disciples*? Are we not frequently inattentive? Do we not sometimes feel a want of interest in the truths which we receive from the Word, which I may now call the lips of Christ? A child may be very plainly taught, but if you cannot get its attention, if you cannot catch its will and interest it, it will not learn much, but that which you teach it will glide like oil over a slab of marble—it does not penetrate and permeate, and consequently is not properly and thoroughly learned. And often on the Lord's day you will hear most delightful truth, but if you are not interested in it, it does not catch your mind.

And in reading Scripture, how seldom do we show as much interest as we do in reading a letter from a friend? With what glistening eyes will some persons read the will of their relatives, and they never forget what they read there, because mind and heart are deeply interested. But alas! how often do we turn from these sacred pages without enough interest to learn what is in them!

We are not so roused to drink in their spirit. We do not bring our souls up to the truth and it is not any wonder, therefore, if we do not learn those truths which are so spiritual, that they can only be grasped by a soul in active, alert exercise.

Besides this, we do not learn because of *our ready prejudice against the special truth we ought to learn*. A great part of God's truth is very unpalatable to human nature—to learn it is something like taking bitter medicine—people do not choose it with enthusiasm.

There are some truths which would always be unpalatable, even to Christians, Christians as they are, if it were not for the sugar which sometimes goes with the truth, and but for this it would be very nauseous to them. There are some minds which seem more than others to kick against certain points of divine truth, either from their prejudices, their education, or the nature and force of their constitution—and it is only the Spirit of God who can come and irresistibly convince the understanding.

Ah! friends, when the scholar does not want to know, it needs a God to teach him—and sometimes our minds do not wish to know the truth. I should not like to say a hard thing of God's people, but I

believe there are many of them who do not want to know too much. I have often thought that it has been the case with myself, and I believe it is the case with others.

There is an awkward truth which, if it were learned, would throw us out of our present comfortable position and might even necessitate a change of our ecclesiastical connections if we were to know it—and so we do not want to know it. We do not read any book that might make us know it. We try to look at things on our own side if we can, and do not look fairly at the subject, nor inquire into it. It must, therefore, need the Spirit of God to teach us when truth is so unpalatable and we are so unwilling to learn it.

Then, besides this, beloved, when we recollect *the intense spirituality of truth* and how our carnal natures are always prone to adulterate it with our own predilections and the notions of the flesh, when all things around us bring down the truth from its high spiritual atmosphere, where alone it can flourish, into the smoky, cloudy region of our materialism, bring down food worthy of angels, to become poor bread even for mortals, then we see how desperately we need the Holy Spirit to help us as learners in the school of Christ.

We seize the fair fruit of divine truth with a careless, hasty hand, mar its heavenly bloom, never knowing its richest beauty and essence—and then we feel how true of us are Paul's words, inspired of the Holy Spirit, written to certain Christians, "Not as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, and babes in Christ Jesus."

These, then, are a few of the reasons why the Spirit of God is needed. There are plenty more, of which we will speak another day, but I think every Christian knows experientially that he never does learn the truth fully and hold it tenaciously except by the teaching and sustaining grace of God the Holy Spirit.

I like our young people to learn the *Westminster Assembly's Confession of Faith*. It is a "form of sound words" that is well worth committing to memory, but even Christian people, when they know them, will find that, unless those truths are one by one brought home to the soul, they have only the shell of truth, but do not know the life and inner essence of it. We must have everything we truly learn burnt into us by the Holy Ghost.

It must be taught us sometimes by painful experience, at other times by blissful enjoyment—sometimes by a marvelous illumination, a light shining upon a passage in such a way that we see it as we never saw it before, and though we may have read it twenty times, we now for the first time in our lives see its true meaning and rejoice therein.

Why, dear friends, what is the ministry without the Spirit of God? Do you not often come and go, and find no comfort in attending a place of worship? And even the Bible itself without the Spirit of God is but a lantern without a light, and what is even the mercy seat, except the Holy Spirit be there, enabling us to drink into the very life and soul of the divine teaching?

It is not that Book as it is there on the paper—it is that Book as it must be written on the fleshy tablets of our heart, which becomes to us the Word of God, the word of our salvation in which we rejoice and upon which we often feed. This second truth you know, and will never doubt, that we need the Holy Spirit to teach us truth.

The third thing that is in the text is this—the Holy Spirit is said not only to teach us, but—

III. TO BRING TO OUR REMEMBRANCE THE TRUTH WHICH WE HAVE RECEIVED.

Mark! The Holy Spirit does not now reveal fresh truth beyond what is already in the Word of God. There is a special curse pronounced upon any who shall add to this Book—and you may rest assured that the Holy Spirit will not so transgress in a matter which He has peremptorily forbidden all His children to commit.

When persons start up as prophets, or prophetesses, and tell us that they have had special visions from the Lord and they know what is going to happen next year, we always understand that their proper destination is Bethlehem Hospital [London psychiatric hospital], and we begin immediately to shun them and their books. We are persuaded that the Holy Spirit makes no such fresh revelations to men

now, but teaches us what Christ taught, bringing all these things to our remembrance. What Christ has taught, and only that, it is His joyous work to make plain and clear, and powerful to us.

Why do we need to have the truths thus spoken brought to our remembrance? Is it not that *we often trust our memories* not to forget these truths, but “he who trusts his own heart is a fool,” and so is he who relies absolutely on his own memory. For anything bad, alas! we may trust it only too well—we are sure to recollect the thing far better forgotten.

But if it be anything very good and soul-inspiring, memory has a paralysis in the fingers and cannot retain it in their grasp. You may remember a great many things in business—these are sure to write themselves deeply on the memory, but divine things, which concern the future state, are often written so illegibly that they are very readily blurred, blotted out, and we need the Holy Spirit to bring these things to our remembrance.

And then, again, *we are so constantly beset with cares* that it is little marvelous that the things of God should slip away from us. You have but one day in the week, as it were, devoted to these things—one day of building and six of pulling down. With many it is one day’s storing and six days’ scattering. It is but a slight advance that we make towards heaven.

Believe me, it is one of the greatest joys of my heart to see you here so constantly at prayer meetings and on lecture nights, and it always seems to me to be one of the best signs of vital godliness that can well be exhibited, except a holy life, to see people willing to come out to the weeknight services. Any hypocrite will come on Sundays, but to come on weekdays seems to me to be a favorable sign and a proof of sincerity.

But even then how little do we get! Perhaps there is trouble in the family—from the first thing in the morning till the last thing at night it is nothing but hard work and there is the looking for the wherewithal we shall be clothed—and we do not always cast our care on Him who cares for us. So the thorns too often choke up the seed, and did not the Holy Spirit bring these things to our remembrance, they might quickly slip away altogether.

There is, again, brethren, another reason for needing to be reminded of these truths, namely, because *we forget what we do not thoroughly apprehend*. I have a notion that, as a rule, what a man thoroughly understands, through and through, he does not forget. When you have mastered a fact or truth, seen it from all points, grown familiar with it, it is not easy to let it slip. You may hold a joint of meat in your hand and be very hungry all the while. But cook your joint, eat of it, and properly digest what you eat, and it is yours and hunger goes.

The man who receives truth in the mere letter of it may quickly forget it, but he who has received it in the spirit, understood it, digested it, assimilated it, will never altogether lose its nourishing and upbuilding power. When a truth is understood, it is somewhat like it was with the boy from whom the priest took away his New Testament. “Ah!” said the boy, “but what will you do with the ten chapters that I have learned by heart? You cannot take those away.”

Memory does not readily lose the things she really understands, and when the heart has penetrated into the marrow of truth, and truth into the marrow of the heart, it abides. But alas! with the most of divine things, we do not seek to enter into them as we should. We hear them and that is all. We hear, but we do not understand, and hence the Spirit of God is needed to ring the bells of heaven again and again in our ears and to make us hear the same truth over and over again, bringing to remembrance what Christ has told us.

If it be asked how He does this, the answer is that He does it by instrumentality, as well as by His own immediate action. He does it through the preaching of the Word. The Word of God brings to your mind the old truth that you have heard ever since you were a boy or girl, and thank God, it has not lost its preciousness, but is just as sweet to your ears now as it was when you heard it from old Dr. So-and-so, who has now gone home to heaven. Thank God you love that truth still, whenever it is brought to your remembrance.

I like to use the same Bible always in my study, and to mark it, so that I may afterwards know the places which once filled me with delight and comfort. And sometimes the good old Book which we have studied so long will thus bring things to our remembrance.

Then there is communion with Christian brethren. Sometimes even an illiterate Christian brother may set a truth in such a light as you never saw it in before, just like some of those fine old pieces of architecture which are very fine from one point of view, but some day you are taken to another point and you say, "Well, I think it is even more beautiful from this place of revealing than from the other." So my conversation with Christian brethren often sheds for me a new light upon long-known and precious truths.

But over and above all this, I believe that the Holy Spirit does actually come into contact with our spirits, apart from human instrumentality, and that when we are walking by the way, sitting in the house, or in our chamber of prayer, flashes sudden light upon the truth, and so we learn what we knew not before, and turning to God's Word, we perceive it to be blest truth that was always there, but which we had not seen until the Holy Spirit opened our eyes.

Brethren and sisters, if we do not experientially know what it is to have the truth as it is in Jesus brought to our remembrance by the Holy Spirit, we must not rest satisfied until we do, for this is one of the marks and evidences, as well as one of the privileges of the child of God, that the Holy Spirit is his personal teacher. "All your children shall be taught of the LORD," and again and again does the adorable Third Person of the Divine Trinity teach us the things of Christ and bring them constantly to our remembrance.

I am sorry that I cannot enter more fully into this point for want of time, but we must now close with the last point, which is a question for us all—

IV. HOW FAR HAS THIS OFFICE OF THE HOLY GHOST BEEN PERFORMED IN US?

I will first ask those of you who profess to be *the people of God*. Has the Holy Ghost taught you anything? Is that a hard question? It is one that was asked of old—"Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" I am solemnly afraid that there are some professors who are content to have been convinced of sin, to have been led to trust in Christ, but who, after that, are utterly indifferent to the Holy Spirit as their teacher.

They sit in the house of God, but they do not apply their minds to learn the truth. They pin their faith to somebody's sleeve and are content to believe according to the last speaker they hear, so that they will one day believe one thing, and another day another thing, and so are carried about with every wind of doctrine.

Brethren, these things ought not to be. Receiving Christ as a Priest, we ought also to receive Him as a Prophet, and if we are quickened by the Holy Ghost, we ought also to seek to be illuminated and instructed by Him. Have you and I felt the Holy Spirit at work with us, endearing doctrine, and making it more precious to us? Have we, indeed, ever sought His influence, or have we, though professing Christians, lived thoughtlessly in this respect?

Do you not think that if we have done so, we have grieved the Holy Spirit? What grieves a man more than to deny the importance of the office and work for which he lives? What should grieve the Holy Spirit more than this, among other things, to forget His office as our instructor and to ignore altogether the great purpose for which He is to be found in the midst of the Christian church at all times?

Surely we should be seeking with all our prayers to pray, "Teach me, O God! And lead me in the plain truth!" And we should long to sit with Mary at the Master's feet. Do you really study your Bibles, my dear brothers and sisters? Why you can scarcely bring out a magazine or a newspaper nowadays, and make it pay, even with religious people, without a tale! It is one of the signs of the times that feeble-fiction-reading is as common among Christians as among others, and that our young disciples—young men and women both—must have a sensational novel in a religious form, or they will not read at all.

Time was when Christian women, as well as men, read history, studied the fascinations of science, and cultivated their best qualities of mind and heart. And Christian men in days past, in the Puritanic and

later ages, sought to be acquainted with solid literature, as well as with the Word of God. But it seems to be the last mark of the degeneracy of God's people that they must have their ears tickled with a straw and cannot read solid truth.

You need not wonder that we cannot breed men on chaff, or that they are blown about with every wind of doctrine, when this is the food on which they live. There are certain silkworms which grow the color of the leaves they feed on, and you may depend upon it that those who live on this frivolous literature will lead frivolous lives, and those who take nothing but these milk-and-water tales will not be likely to have about them anything solid or robust, or anything vigorously real. Do not talk to me of reading such things!

Brethren, when you and I have read our Bibles through so as to find nothing there to interest us, it is high time that we asked God to teach us how to read them. It is a sign of a want of grace if the Bible is a dry book. It is a dry book, a very dry book, to a graceless soul, but it has more in it than all the rest of the volumes in the world put together. And the more it is studied, the more will the interest of the student in it increase.

Besides, we have such an abundance of other Christian literature that no Christian ought to say he is obliged to read the other poor stuff. We have no time to spare for this, when the soul is starving and dying for lack of knowledge. Let us pray the Holy Spirit to lead us into the Word of God, and then give ourselves to its earnest and loving study.

But this question will scarcely refer at all to some now present. My dear hearers, are you among *those who have no interest in these things*? It is not likely that you should desire the Holy Spirit to instruct you. There are, I fear, some here who have no hope and are without God in the world. The mere statement of the fact ought to excite us all to prayer for such.

But alas! it is so commonly known that there are many out of Christ, and without hope, that we do not feel distressed about it as we should. If there were fewer unregenerate sinners than there are, we would probably be more concerned about them. If there were only a dozen unconverted persons in the world, all the church of God would be praying for their conversion, but because there are many millions of them, they are so common that we do not look upon them with the awe, the tenderness, and the yearning sympathy which we ought to feel.

There are some here to whom the Holy Spirit is an unknown person, who have never been made alive unto God by Him, and consequently cannot desire that they may be instructed by Him. Oh! that the blessed Spirit would come and convince them of their sin in not believing, which is the greatest of all sins and the very sin of which the Spirit comes to convince men. "He shall convince them of sin because they believe not on me."

Oh! may He convince them of this sin and then may they understand that there is nothing for them to do, but that Christ has done it for them and that all they have to do is to receive the finished work, to wear the finished robe, to look to Jesus Christ, and to find life in the look.

Pray for them, brethren, that the Holy Ghost may help their infirmities, that they may know Christ, and may come to Him. May God bless the Gospel to them whenever it is preached, and when they are told that "the Son of Man came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost," may they cry unto Him and trust Him, for this is the vital part of the business, and trusting in Him, they shall enter into eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

ROMANS 9:26-32

The Jews thought that God must certainly save them. They thought they had a birth claim. Were they not the children of Abraham? Surely they had some right to it. This chapter battles the question of right.

No man has any right to the grace of God. The terms are inconsistent. But that same grace delights to save and bless even the perverse and rebellious who will yield to its blessed power.

Verse 26. *And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.*

In the very same place where their sins made it patent and palpable they were not God's people—in that very same place shall men confess that they are the children of the living God. Oh! what has not grace done?

27-29. *Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the LORD make upon the earth. And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorra.*

God has a people, then, even in Israel with all its rejection. And He always will have, for He will never make the seed of Abraham to be as Sodom and Gomorrah. He will love His own and glorify Himself in the midst of His people.

30. *What shall we say then?*

Why, say this—

30. *That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.*

For thousands of years they worshipped brutish idols and blocks and stones. Their philosophy was mixed with filthiness. Their lives were abhorrent to God. Even these, at last, have attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith, for the Gospel being preached among the Gentiles, they have believed in Jesus and they are saved.

31. *But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.*

Israel followed after the law of righteousness with many ceremonies and external washings, and wearings of phylacteries and bordered garments. Alas! poor Israel!

32. *Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone;*

And God is determined that they that are of the law shall not inherit it. He has made it a sovereign decree that the believer shall be justified and saved, but no one else. They sought it not by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law.

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